[TM] New Constitution Adopted

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On 26 September 2008 President Gurbanguly Berdymukhamedov signed into law the new Constitution of Turkmenistan, adopted that same day by the 21st extraordinary session of the *Halk Maslahaty* (People's Council). The new Constitution replaces the text adopted in 1992 which, itself, was amended several times.

The new Constitution does not make significant changes in the legal status of the mass media. Article 28 states that “citizens of Turkmenistan shall have the right to freedom of opinion and their free expression, as well as to receive information unless it represents a state secret or any other secret protected by law”. Article 21 provides that the “execution of rights and liberties shall not violate the rights and freedoms of others, or contravene morality, law, public order, or national security”.

Article 25 protects one’s privacy and correspondence, honour and dignity. Article 39 provides for artistic freedoms and Article 43 stipulates for judicial protection of honour and dignity, of other personal and political rights and freedoms listed in the Constitution and national statutes. They are also granted the right to appeal courts decisions and actions of the government.Article 47 permits the suspension of constitutional rights during martial law and emergency situations only. Article 105 states that court proceedings are to be held in public.

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Constitution of Turkmenistan

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